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INFO RUCNCLS/ALL SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA COLLECTIVE
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RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 2855
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RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 1202
RUEHVEN/USMISSION USOSCE 3242
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 2628
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO BRUSSELS BE
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BISHKEK 000121

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR P AND SCA/CEN

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/11/2019

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [MARR](#) [KG](#)

SUBJECT: FORMER KYRGYZ VICE PRIME MINISTER ON PLANS TO OUST
BAKIYEV

REF: A. BISHKEK 119 (NOTAL)

[1](#)B. BISHKEK 109

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Classified By: Ambassador Tatiana C. Gfoeller, Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (C) Summary. In a February 9 meeting with DCM, former Deputy Prime Minister Elmira Ibraimova (protect) discussed her plans to create an opposition to the Bakiyev regime. She claimed that she and former Presidency Chief of Staff Sadyrkulov have widespread support among the Ak Jol Presidential party, rank and file bureaucrats and the general population. She will make a public statement soon that will start the process to force Bakiyev out. She understood the personal risk involved, and expressed concern that Bakiyev and his family would not hesitate to use violence to remain in power, but said the Bakiyev family's greed and misrule "cannot go on any longer." She believes her group must act within the next two months, in part before Bakiyev gets his hands on the \$150 million Russia has promised. She asked that the U.S. not take sides. End Summary.

Initial hopes to curb Bakiyev's excesses

[1](#)2. (C) In a February 9 meeting with DCM at the Hyatt Hotel, former Deputy Prime Minister Elmira Ibraimova explained her motivation for creating a new opposition movement to force President Bakiyev from office. People are fed up with the Bakiyev family, because there are no limits on their greed and ambition. She and former Presidential Chief of Staff Sadyrkulov had hoped that, in helping form the President's Ak Jol party in the run up to the December 2007 parliamentary elections, they would be able to put a brake on some of the Bakiyev family excesses.

Bakiyev has sold out the country

[1](#)3. (C) As it turned out, within four months of joining the Government last May, by September Ibraimova said she was disillusioned and ready to resign -- she had even discussed doing so with a representative of the Social Democratic

party. Ibraimova stayed on, though, and claimed that had she not done so the current situation would be much worse than it is now. Nevertheless, Bakiyev has exceeded all limits; the recent deal with Moscow essentially means that Bakiyev has sold out his country for \$150 million. This is unacceptable. Ibraimova said she had a long exit discussion with Bakiyev at the time of her resignation where it was crystal clear he does not understand the damage he's doing to his country; he is incapable of ruling for the benefit of the people and, worse, he does not care.

We have support; everyone is fed up

¶4. (C) Ibraimova claimed that she and Sadyrkulov have support in their desire to topple Bakiyev. Ak Jol has over 142,000 members; more than half are with them, she said, as are many more non-party members. Bakiyev has his loyalists in place at the top, but he does not have the support of rank and file government employees. Business leaders, she said, are particularly angry at the Bakiyev family's relentless takeover of all sectors of the economy. Although reluctant to name names, Ibraimova indicated they were talking to "anyone who might be helpful." The one exception is the opposition party Ata Meken, though, which she claims is discredited and whose leaders have little public support.

We are serious; we understand the risk

¶5. (C) Ibraimova said she and her group are very serious and understand the risk involved. Their lives, and those of their supporters, are at stake. The Bakiyev clan is prepared to kill to remain in power. Ibraimova identified Bakiyev's brother Janesh, now head of Presidential Security Services,

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as the main threat to their security. "Sometimes you have to take risks," she said, "given the alternative of taking no action." Elections are not the answer, she continued, they are manipulated with the results dictated in advance.

Next steps

¶6. (C) Ibraimova said she plans to make a public statement soon; we will be able to gauge the level of her support by the public reaction to it. She said she and Sadyrkulov are convinced that the window to act is now -- over the next month or two. In part, before Bakiyev gets his hands on the \$150 million from Russia, and before Russia takes over the energy sector and all the key assets of the country.

U.S. Position

¶7. (C) Ibraimova understood that the U.S. was in a delicate position over the future status of Manas Air Base, and would proceed very cautiously. She did not ask for financial assistance, but did request that the U.S. maintain a "centrist position" -- and not side with Bakiyev. She ended the meeting by saying she appreciated the opportunity to "consult" with the Embassy periodically.

Comment

¶8. (C) Ibraimova, who is a soft-spoken but firm character, was calm but serious throughout the meeting. Without revealing any tactical plans, she provided some additional details of the effort, described to the Ambassador by Sadyrkulov (Ref A), to unseat Bakiyev within the next two months by peeling away public, political, government and business support and isolating the Bakiyev family and its coterie. What is unclear is what the catalyst might be that would turn widespread but silent dissatisfaction into public opposition that could force Bakiyev to resign.

GFOELLER